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14. ABSTRACT

In this study a series of three-dimensional unsteady reacting flow simulations are used to investigate the effect of swirl on the instability amplitude of a single-element gas-gas rocket combustor. The baseline combustor of interest is unstable because of a fuel cut-off event caused by the high-pressure waves in the combustor. Previous two-dimensional simulations have shown that swirl reduces the amplitude of the pressure oscillations compared with that of the baseline configuration. The current three-dimensional simulations show that swirl is indeed able reduce the amplitude of the instabilities, albeit not to the same extent observed in the two-dimensional simulations. We further observe that the enhanced mixing due to the swirling flow leads to a reduction in the recovery time associated with the fuel cut-off event, thereby allowing the combustor to experience a more continuous heat release. Nevertheless, unlike the two-dimensional case, the three-dimensional simulations show that the flame does not stay anchored to the dump-plane, which explains the higher relative amplitudes in this case.

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Effect of Swirl on an Unstable Single-Element Gas-Gas Rocket Engine



Matthew E. Harvazinski, Venkateswaran Sankaran, and Douglas G. Talley

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Outline



- Introduction
- Overview of the instability mechanism present in the current configuration
- Prior results form a 2D parametric study
- Results from the series of 3D simulations
- Summary



History



Combustion instability is an <u>organized</u>, <u>oscillatory</u> motion in a combustion chamber <u>sustained by combustion</u>.

CI caused a four year delay in the development of the F-1 engine used in the Apollo program

- > 2000 full scale tests
- > \$400 million for propellants alone (2010 prices)

Irreparable damage can occur in less than 1 second.



Damaged engine injector faceplate caused by combustion instability

"Combustion instabilities have been observed in almost every engine development effort, including even the most recent development programs"

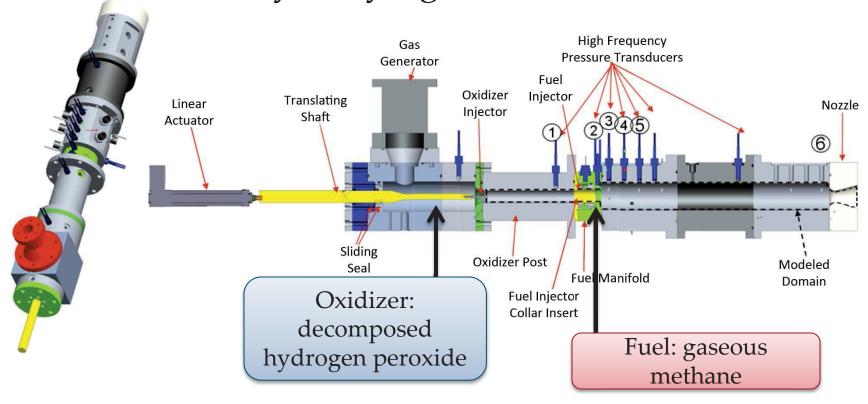
- JANNAF Stability Panel Draft (2010)



Longitudinal Experiment



Continuously Varying Resonance Chamber

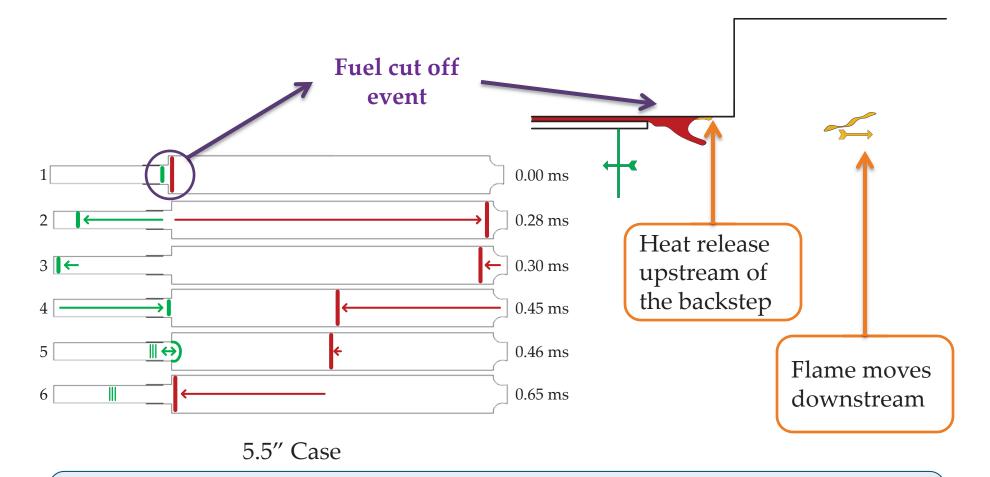


Mean pressure, 1.37 MPa (200 psi)



Pulse Timing I





- In the 3.5" case the returning pulse arrives sooner in the cycle
- In the 7.5" case the returning pulse arrives later in the cycle



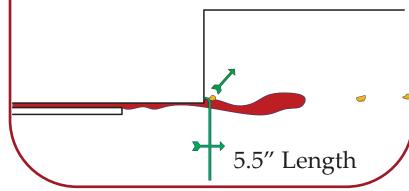
Pulse Timing II



After the fuel cutoff event the combustion restarts through one of two identified mechanisms

Post-coupled Ignition

Mechanism: The returning wave in the oxidizer post pushes unburnt fuel into the warm recirculating gases at the backstep where ignition takes place



Vortex Transport Mechanism:

The post wave arrives later in the cycle, the unburnt fuel slowly mixes with the recirculating gases in the shear layer. Ignition takes place in the shear layer downstream of the backstep





Baroclinic Torque



$$\frac{\mathrm{d}\omega}{\mathrm{d}t} = (\boldsymbol{\omega} \cdot \boldsymbol{\nabla}) \, \mathbf{u} - \boldsymbol{\omega} \, (\boldsymbol{\nabla} \cdot \mathbf{u}) + \frac{1}{\rho^2} \, (\boldsymbol{\nabla}\rho \times \boldsymbol{\nabla}p) + \boldsymbol{\nabla} \times \left(\frac{1}{\rho} \boldsymbol{\nabla} \cdot \boldsymbol{\tau}\right)$$

Generation of vorticity due to misaligned density and pressure gradients

In the CVRC pressure pulses in the oxidizer post interact with the shear layer and generate vorticity



Increased vorticity results in increased mixing and generates partially premixed regions susceptible to combustion

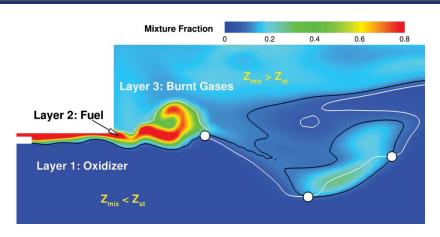


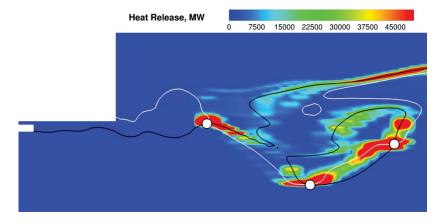
Tribrachial Flame



• Intersection of:

- Diffusion flame
- Partially premixed fuel rich flame
- Partially premixed fuel lean flame
- Location of intense heat release
- Observed in the CVRC by Garby et. al. and Guézennec et. al





White line,
$$T = 2000 \text{ K}$$

Black line, $Z = Z_{\text{st}} = 0.095739$

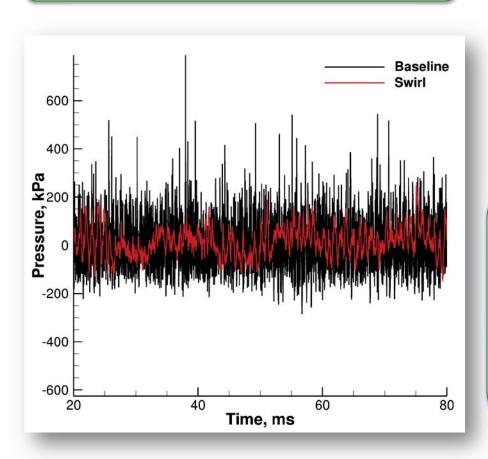
$$\mathsf{Z} = \frac{\nu_{\rm st} Y_{\rm CH_4} - Y_{\rm O_2} + Y_{\rm O_2}^0}{\nu_{\rm st} Y_{\rm CH_4}^0 + Y_{\rm O_2}^0}$$



2D Parametric Study



2D Swirl shows substantial reductions in amplitude



Case	p'_{ptp} , kPa	Frequency, Hz
Experiment	387.15	1324
BL	135.19	1460
S-1	78.82	1480
S-2	65.00	1480
S-3	40.72	1480
S-4	60.61	1480

Concerns:

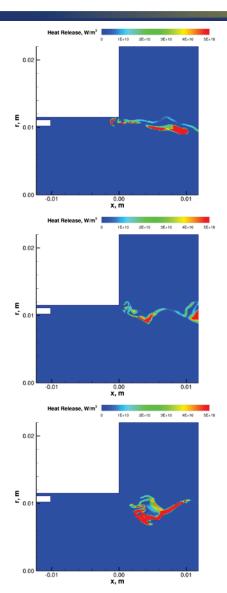
- Total amplitudes in 2D are lower compared with 3D
- Swirl component is assumed axisymmetric and may be stronger than 3D

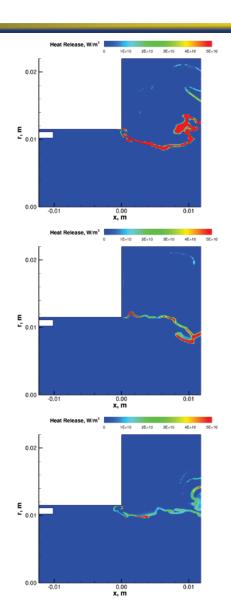


2D Shows Attached Flame



No swirl









Three-dimensional Study



Examine the effect of swirl when exposed to the larger amplitude consistent with the experimental results

Remove the axisymmetric assumption

Swirl is imposed using a boundary condition, not geometry

$$u_{\theta}(r) = u \cdot \left(\frac{r}{R_s}\right) \sin(\theta_S)$$

Four cases:

Baseline

3° Swirl

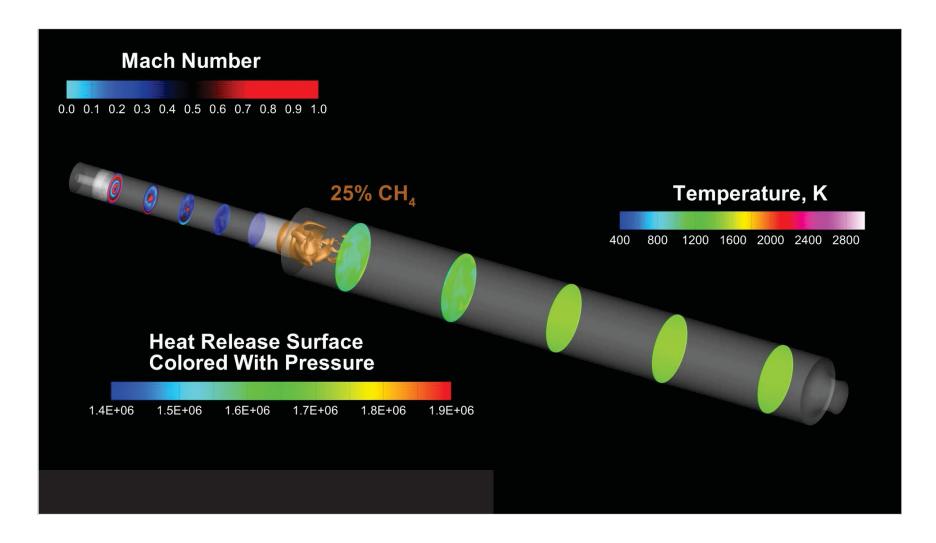
9° Swirl

15° Swirl



Simulation without Swirl







Simulation with Swirl



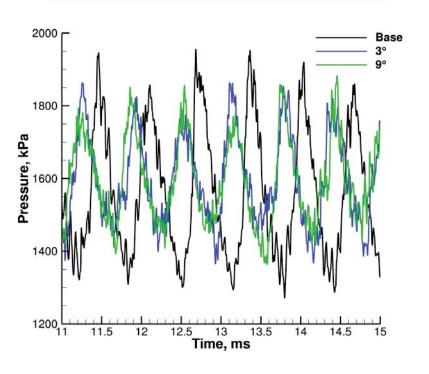


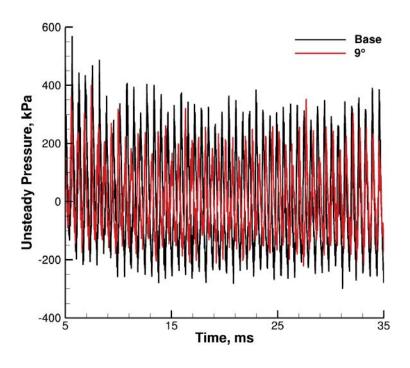
Pressure Amplitude



Swirl has a wider trough with more unsteady fluctuations

Swirl has a lower amplitude.

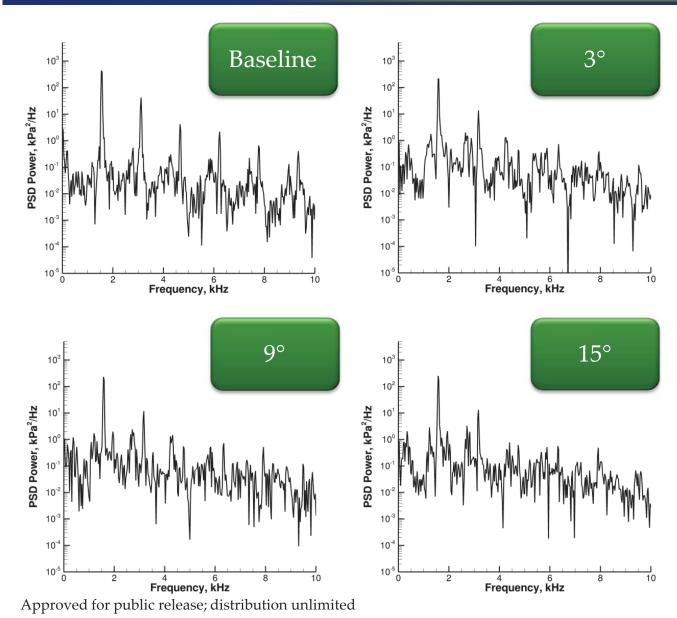






Power Spectral Density Analysis





Swirl has lower amplitudes

Higher order modes hare more difficult to identify with swirl

Unknown mode between L1 and L2 for each swirl case



Amplitudes



PSD data is integrated using the FWHM method to determine the peak-topeak pressure for each mode.

Mode	Baseline		3°		9°		15°	
	f, Hz	p', kPa	f, Hz	p', kPa	f, Hz	p', kPa	f, Hz	p', kPa
1	1543	349.10	1600	265.88	1571	248.80	1571	251.77
Unknown	_	_	2886	17.37	2714	29.72	2714	21.55
2	3114	87.55	3171	61.19	3171	60.66	3171	66.19
3	4629	36.25	4723	28.47	4723	25.59	4723	27.65

9° of swirl had the greatest reduction, about 30%

Amplitude reduction is less than the 2D prediction

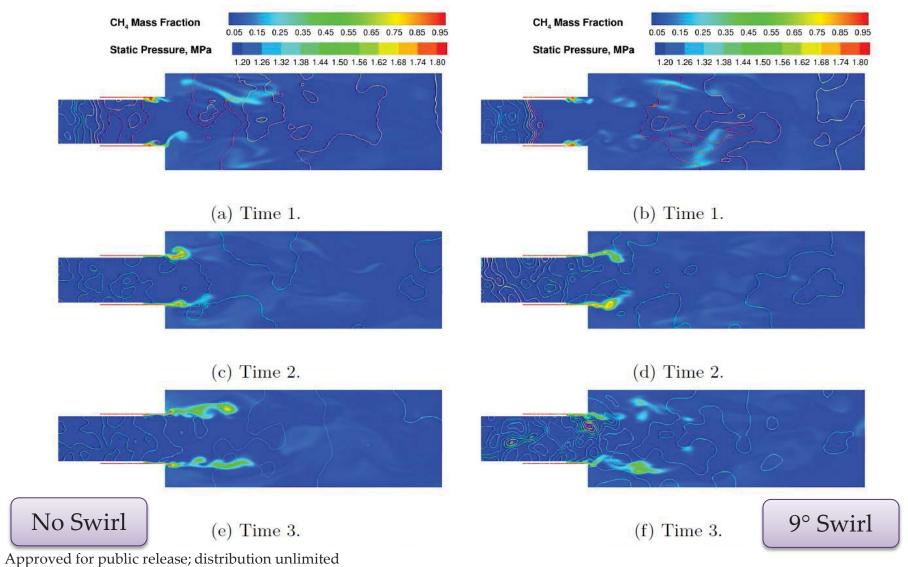
The unknown mode has a weak amplitude.

Baseline compares
well with
experimental
results



Methane Cycle

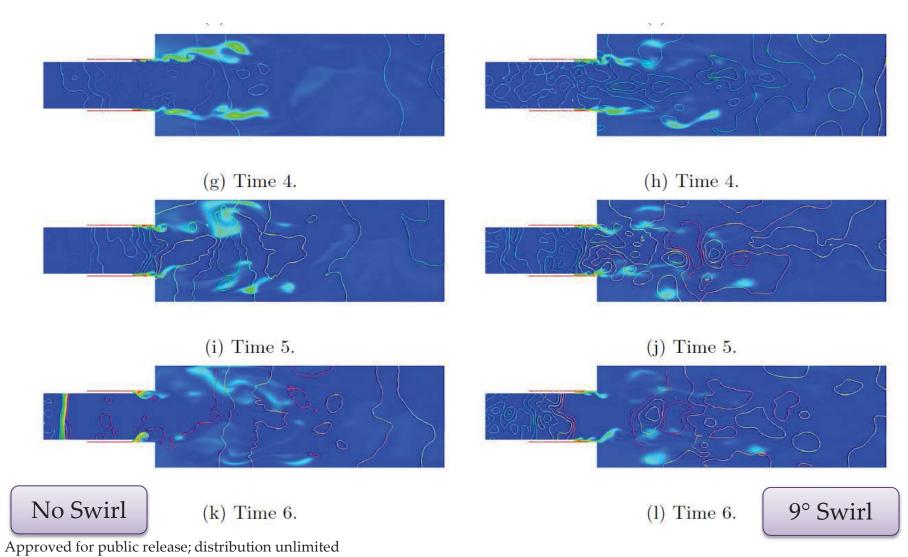






Methane Cycle II

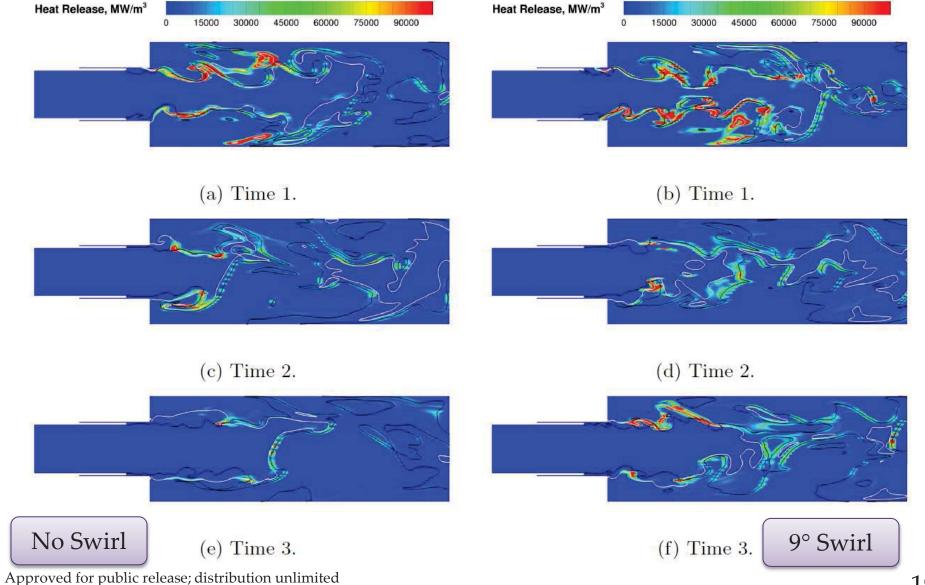






Heat Release Cycle

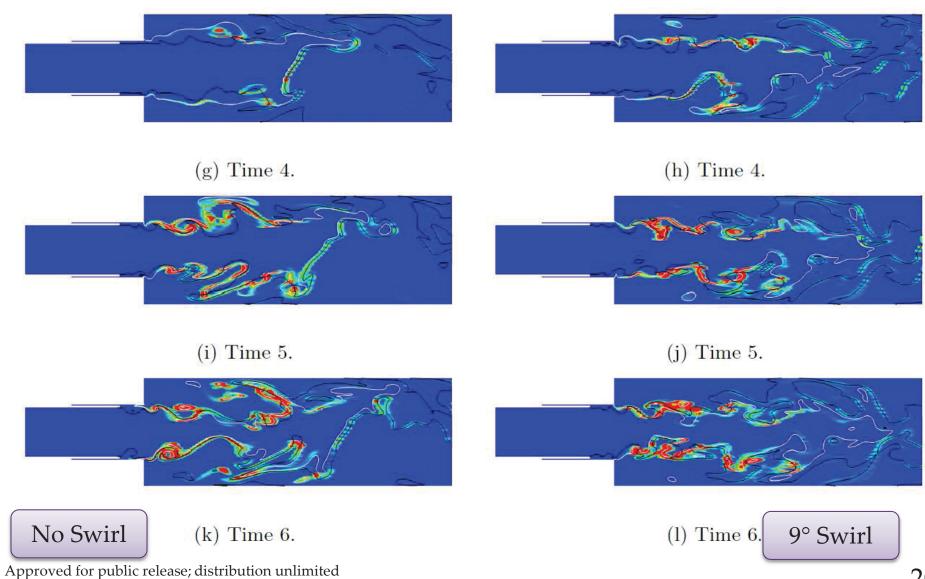






Heat Release Cycle II







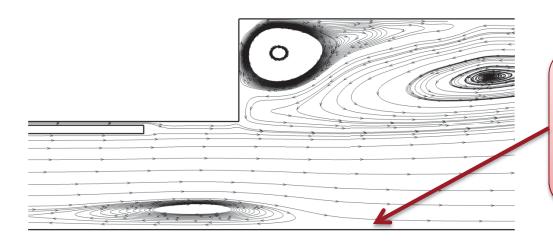
Lack of a CTRZ



Central toroidal recirculation zones can be found in flows with swirl.

The CTRZ has a stabilizing effect

A CTRZ was found in 2D but not 3D

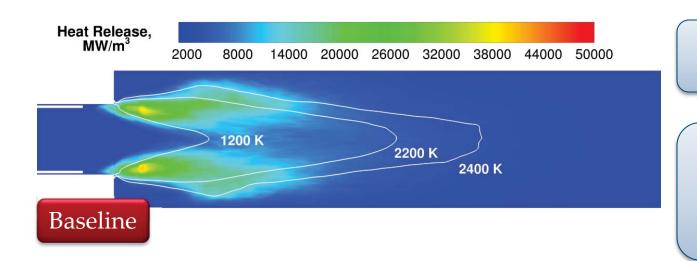


Possibly a result of the artificial centerline boundary condition



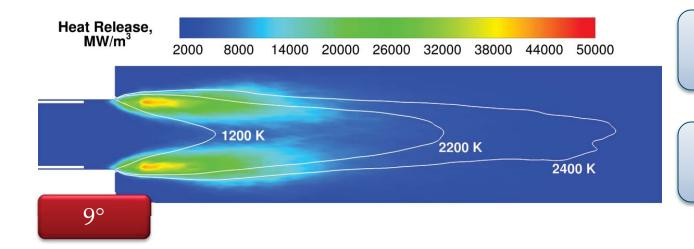
Time Averaged Flowfield





Heat release is similar for all three swirl cases

Swirl shows that the heat release that is confined to the shear layer



No "bump" in heat release

No evidence of a CTRZ in 3D!

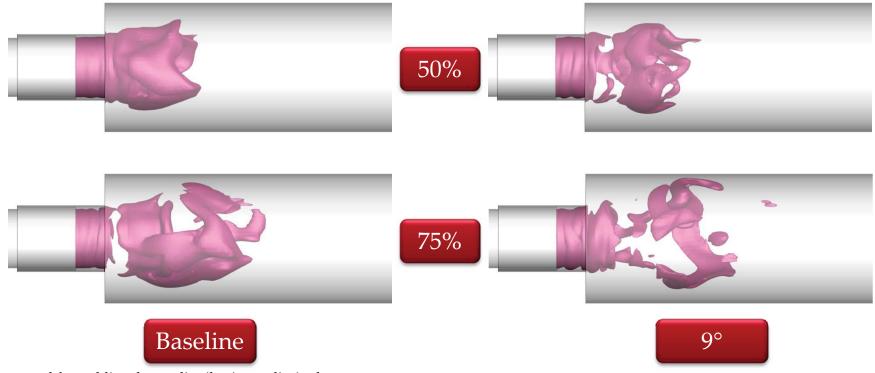


Accumulation of Fuel



Cycle analysis showed that heat release resumes quickly in the swirl case compared to the baseline

There is less fuel accumulation in the cycle and evidence of consumption sooner



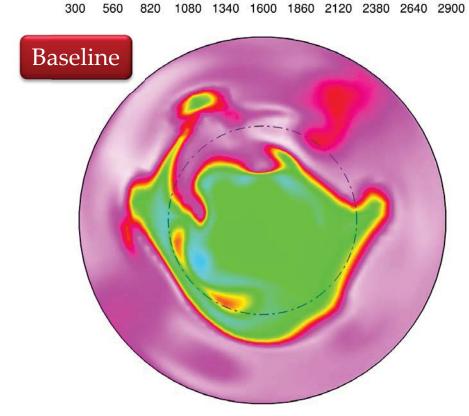


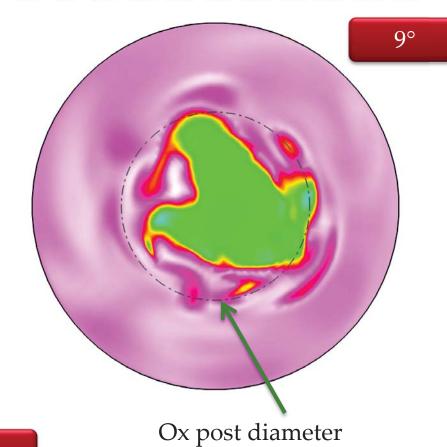




Temperature, K

300 560 820 1080 1340 1600 1860 2120 2380 2640 2900

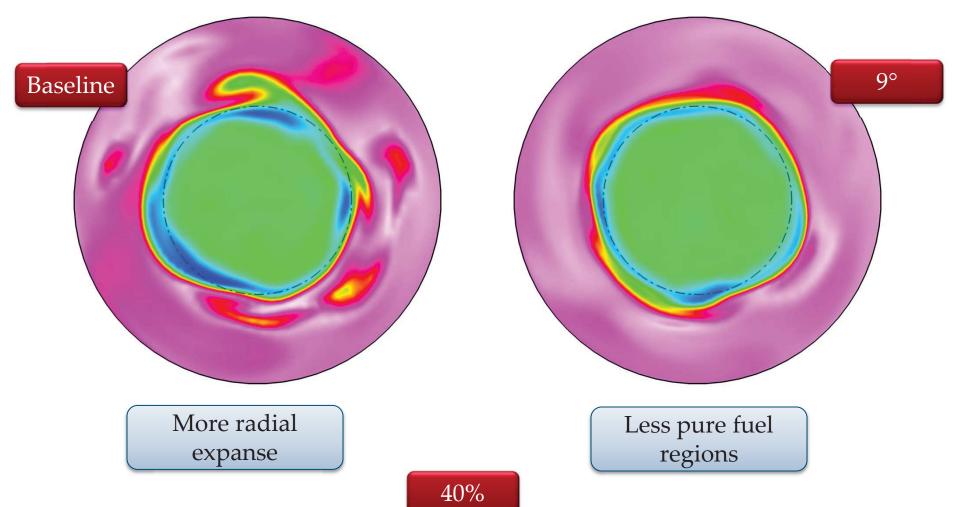




20%

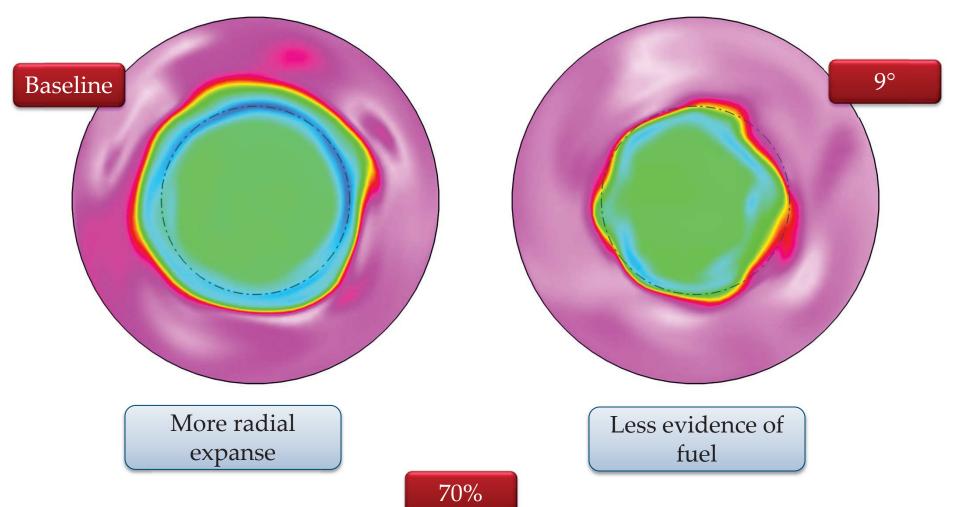






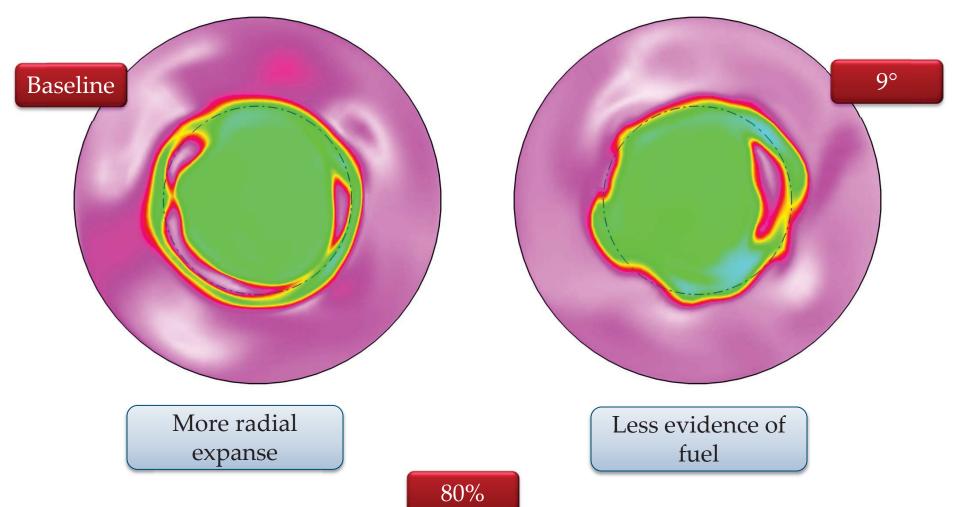










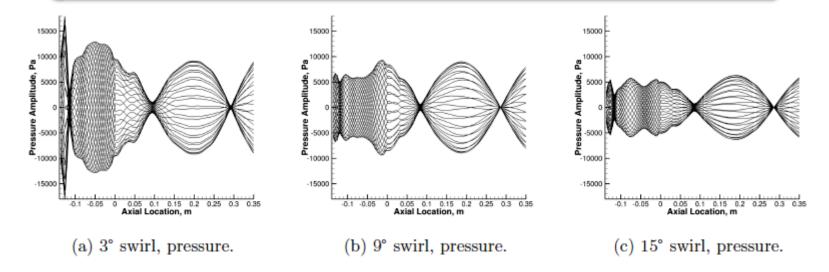




Unknown Mode



Unknown mode was found in the swirl cases with a frequency between the first and second longitudinal modes



No evidence of a PVC mode or spinning mode

A similar mode was found in a 3.5" simulation which had a similar amplitude to the swirl cases.



Summary



A numerical investigation of the effect of swirl on an unstable single-element gas-gas rocket engine was undertaken

The addition of swirl to the fuel reduced the amplitude by 30%

The reduction of amplitude was a result of:

Improved mixing between the fuel and oxidizer

Shorter recovery time of the fuel cut off event

More continuous heat release throughout the cycle

The percent amplitude reduction in 3D was not as great as 2D, but had a similar absolute reduction in amplitude

2D simulations should be used to reduce the number 3D simulations



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